

# Role of Library Associations in the Betterment of Librarianship in India

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## *Abstract*

*Library Associations are play a major role in the development of libraries and library profession. Present study discusses about the history and development of library associations in India. A detailed description of Indian Library Association (ILA) and Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC) is given to represent the role and activities of general and special library association.*

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**Keywords:** Library Association, Role of Library Associations, Library Associations in India, ILA, IASLIC.

## 1. Introduction

A library association is the foundation on which the structure of library movement can be erected. It is the source of incessant energy which can energise all the activities aimed at the provision and maintenance of library service. Library associations play an important role in the promotion of librarianship as a profession vital to an informed and knowledgeable society. The American Library Association was established as early as 1876 and the Library Association of Great Britain was formed in 1877. The library development of these countries owes much to the efforts made by their respective library associations. In India, the library association on whole country basis which still exists was formed in 1933. There were some other library associations of all India character evidenced by the study of the Indian library literature. Library associations in India have been playing an important role in conveying useful messages and guidelines for library development, acting in transitional era as meeting places for professionals, helping them exchange opinions and promoting free access to information while also facing a series of structural, political cultural and financial challenges. Despite this scale of involvement, there has been relatively little analysis of the characteristics and services Indian library associations should manage the entire professional community.

## 2. Objectives of Library Associations

When we talk about the objectives of library associations more or less every library association have the same objectives and these are as follows:

- Library professional's development for the effective information and library systems and services through mutual cooperation
- To build up a body of professional experience that could be utilized in the smooth and effective functioning of the libraries and information centres.

- To help libraries provide effective service to students and trainees, field workers, researchers, teachers, administrators and society at large.
- To devise methods and techniques for the improvement in the quality of collection development and dissemination of information.
- To foster mutual co-operation and assistance among various libraries in the country and the library personnel's working therein.
- To serve as an institution for the exchange of professional knowledge and experience by organizing training courses, seminars, conferences, lectures, workshops etc.; and by publishing reports, monographs, bulletins, catalogues, bibliographies, and journals; and to promote the interest of public to the libraries and librarianship.
- To promote the cause and development of library profession.
- To co-operate with learned institutions and interested bodies at national and international level in the furtherance of these objectives.

### 3. Library Associations in India

The library associations in India are:

#### *Before Independence*

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|---|------|
| • Andhra Desa Library Association                 | 1914 |
| • All India Public Library Association            | 1919 |
| • Maharashtra Library Association                 | 1921 |
| • Gujarat Pustaklaya Mandal                       | 1923 |
| • Bengal Library Association                      | 1925 |
| • Baroda State Library Association                | 1926 |
| • Madras Library Association                      | 1928 |
| • Punjab Library Association                      | 1929 |
| • Karnataka Library Association                   | 1929 |
| • Samastha Kerala Pustakalaya Samiti              | 1931 |
| • Indian Library Association                      | 1933 |
| • Government of India Library Association         | 1933 |
| • All India Rural Library Services Association    | 1933 |
| • United Provinces Library Association            | 1935 |
| • Bombay State Library Association                | 1935 |
| • Bihar Rajya Granthalaya Sangha                  | 1936 |
| • Malabar Library Association                     | 1937 |
| • Assam Library Association                       | 1938 |
| • Delhi Library Association                       | 1938 |
| • All India Manuscript Library Association        | 1944 |
| • Utkal Library Association                       | 1944 |
| • Travancore Library Association                  | 1945 |
| • Central Provinces and Berar Library Association | 1945 |

#### *After Independence*

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|-------------------------------------|------|
| • Hyderabad Library Association     | 1951 |
| • Library Field Workers Association | 1951 |
| • Delhi Library Association         | 1953 |
| • National Committee of Archives    | 1953 |
| • Bihar Library Association         | 1955 |

• Indian Associations of Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC)	1955
• Uttar Pradesh Library Association	1956
• Academy of Library Science and Documentation	1956
• Madhya Pradesh Library Association	1957
• Gomantak Library Association	1961
• Karnataka Library Association	1961
• M.P. Library Association	1962
• Rajasthan Library Association	1962
• Gujarat Granthalaya Sangh	1964
• Association of Agricultural Librarians and Documentalists in India (AALDI)	1966
• All India College Library Association	1966
• J&K Library Association	1966
• Indian Association of Teacher of Library and Information Science (IATLIS)	1969
• Haryana Library Association	1969
• Kerala Library Association	1971
• Indian Association of Academic Librarians (INDAAL)	1973
• Society for Information Science	1976
• Indian Archivists	1977
• Medical Library Association of India (MALI)	1981
• Micrographic Congress of India (MCI)	1982
• Association of Government Librarians and Information Specialists (AGLIS)	1987

In attempting to answer the question posed by the title of this paper, we have left out many associations and focused only on two associations and the names of these associations are:

- 1) Indian Library Association (ILA)
- 2) Indian Associations of Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC)

#### **4. Role of Library Associations in the Development of Librarianship in India**

##### **4.1 Indian Library Association (ILA)**

The Indian Library Association (ILA) was founded on 13 September 1933 at Calcutta at the First All India Library Conference attended by a galaxy of intellectuals, educationists, librarians, and eminent citizens of Calcutta. A. C. Woolner, Vice Chancellor of Punjab University and K. M. Asadullah, Librarian of Imperial Library was the first Chairman and Secretary of the association respectively. The headquarters of ILA was shifted to Delhi in August 1964. The Association, existing-to-develop high standards of librarianship and library and information services shall have the following objectives:

1. Promotion of library movement and improvement in Library services in all its aspects in India;
2. Promotion of library science education and the improvement in the training of libraries in India;
3. Promotion of bibliographical study and research in Library Science;
4. Improvement in the status and conditions of services of librarians;

5. Affiliation of the state and other library association with Indian Library Association and co-operation with international organisation with same objectives;
6. Publication of bulletins, periodicals, books, etc. which will tend to the realization of the objectives of the association;
7. Establishment of libraries, documentation and information centres and assistance in their establishment and working;
8. Promotion of appropriate library legislation in India;
9. Providing a common forum to all persons engaged or interested in library and information work by holding conferences and meetings for discussion of professional, technical and organizational issues.

*Major works done by ILA:*

All India Library Conference is organized every year at some places in the country hosted by either a university or an institution or a local library association. Other important activities include organization of workshop, seminars, convention and other activities, which can promote libraries and librarianship in India. Some of the topics in such activities include Library Legislation; School Children Libraries; Library cooperation/ Resource Sharing; Library Personnel; Reading Materials/ Collection Development; Bibliography and Documentation; University Libraries - Their Functions and Problems; Research Libraries in the Country; National Pay Policy for Libraries and Information Centers; National Information System; Computerization and Library Networks; Library Research; and Library Education.

The Indian Library Association is a member of International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) and the Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA). The association hosted IFLA Conference of 1992 in New Delhi. The Association also drafted Model Public Library Bill and arranged advanced training and internship for Indian librarians with the British Library Association in London.

The Association also published ILA Newsletter every month to disseminate current information about the latest trends in the field of Library and Information Science. Another important publication includes the proceedings of the All India Library Conferences since 1978, Indian Library Directory, A Survey of Public Library Services in India, Year's Work on Indian Librarianship, 50 Years of Indian Library Association; 1933-1983 and others.

#### **4.2 Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centre (IASLIC)**

The IASLIC was founded on 3 September 1955 at the lecture hall of the Indian Museum, Calcutta on initiatives and inspirations of librarians, documentalists, information scientists, scientists and technologists. It is much recognized by professionals in the field. Keeping in view the importance of inter-communication of facts and ideas among scientists, technologists and research workers, and of the collection of specialized information among them, IASLIC formulated the following objectives:

1. To undertake, support and co-ordinate research and studies.
2. Organize general and special meetings, seminars, workshops and conferences at regional and national level.
3. Publish journals, monographs, manuals, newsletters, papers, proceedings and reports.
4. Conduct short-term training courses.
5. Collaborate with other fraternal bodies in promoting the interests of the library and information profession.
6. Undertake such other activities which are incidental and conducive to the attainment of its objects.

### *Major works done by IASLIC:*

IASLIC has been organizing seminars and conferences at different parts of the country, which are usually, hosted by university libraries, department of library and information science, institutions, associations, and other information centres. Discussions in the seminars and conferences included different areas of current issues on Mechanization of Library Services, Training of Special Librarianship in India, Rendering of Indic Names, Bibliographical Control of Special Libraries, Methods of Scientific Communication, Decentralization of Library and Information Services, Users and Library and Information Services, Education for Librarianship in India, General versus Special Classification Scheme, Bibliometric Studies, Marketing of Library and Information Services in India, Document and Data Processing, Problems and Prospects of Library Associations in India, Indexing and Abstracting Services in India, Translation Services, and others.

The Association also provided a program titled, "Training in Special Librarianship and Documentation" from 1964 to 1970. The Association also conducted language courses in German, French, and Russian from 1958 to 1963 for translators for special libraries. The Association is affiliated with the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID) and plays an important role for the international cooperation of the two federations. The IASLIC Bulletin, its official organ, has been published quarterly since 1956 and devoted to the advancement and dissemination of the fundamental and applied knowledge of library and information science in an accessible form to professional colleagues who have a common interest in the field in this country and abroad. The IASLIC Newsletter has been a bimonthly publication of the association since 1966 carrying important information and news about the activities of library and information services. Other important publications includes, Directory of Special and Research Libraries in India, Glossary of Cataloguing Terms in (Indian) regional Languages, Education for Librarianship in India; A Survey, Draft General Code for Interlibrary Loan, Methods of Scientific Communication, IASLIC; Perspective, Performance, and Promise-A Silver Jubilee Commemorative Volume, Indexing Systems, and Library Architecture.

## **5. Findings**

The aim of this study is to find the impact of library associations in the betterment of librarianship in India. With the help of above discussion we can see that each association are playing their role in a proper way. ILA and IASLIC conduct conferences and seminars almost in every year and try to cover the new trends in their conferences. Apart from these, they also conduct short term training courses. Both are also providing research programmers' as well, but after 65 years of independence librarianship in India is not as strong as it must be. Somehow or other these associations are also responsible for the present poor condition of librarianship in India. These associations just give their comment on problems, but not take proper action to solve the problem, this is the reason that after 65 years of independence of India, public libraries could not be administered and managed with the clear mandate of law in many states of India. As such, the development of the nation through library services is neglected in some states, and its services are beyond the reach of the rural poor.

## **6. Suggestions**

In the light of the above, opinion for the betterment of librarianship in India, are as follows:

1. Library association should encourage library professionals for joining associations.
2. There should be proper communication and understanding among all library associations and they should work for common objective for the betterment of libraries and librarianship.

Library associations must be serious to save the honour of professionals. They should solve the job related problems of library professionals. Apart from that most of the private sectors are not giving proper remuneration to the library professionals. Most of the library professionals are working on very low salaries.

## **7. Conclusions**

The role of library associations occupies vital importance for the betterment of librarianship in India. The library and information professionals do not get adequate facilities for their professional development even they do not get the social and professional status. It is therefore, library associations should strive for promotion of library services to the people of the country, facilitate training for librarianship and research in library science, cooperation with other library association, promote cause of librarianship and improve the status and condition of service of library personnel in the country.

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